OUR RACE IS OUR NATION

Paul of Tarsus, or Christianity and Jewry

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If there is a single fact which anyone who seriously studies the history of Christianity cannot help but be struck by, it is the almost complete absence of documents regarding the man whose name this great international religion bears – Jesus Christ. We know of him only what is told to us in the New Testament gospels, that is, practically nothing; for these books, though prolix in their descriptions of miraculous facts relating to him, do not give any information about his person and, in particular, about his origins. Oh, we do have, in one of the four canonical gospels, a long genealogy tracing his ancestry from Joseph, the husband of Jesus' mother, all the way back to Adam! But I have always wondered what possible interest this could have for us, given that we are expressly told elsewhere that Joseph had nothing to do with the birth of the Child. One of the many apocryphal gospels – rejected by the Church – attributes the paternity of Jesus to a Roman soldier, distinguished for his bravery and accordingly nicknamed "the Panther." This gospel is cited by Heckel in one of his studies on early Christianity. Yet accepting such evidence would not entirely resolve the very significant question of Christ's origins, because we are not told who his mother Mary was. One of the canonical gospels tells us that she was the daughter of Joachim and Anne, although Anne had passed the age of maternity; in other words, she too must have been born miraculously, or could perhaps have been simply a child adopted by Anne and Joachim in their old age, which hardly clarifies matters[1].

But there is something much more disconcerting. The annals of an important monastery of the Essene sect, located only about twenty miles from Jerusalem, have

recently been discovered. These annals deal with a period extending from the beginning of the first century before Jesus Christ to the second half of the first century after him, and they refer, *seventy years before his birth*, to a great Initiate or spiritual Master – a "Teacher of Righteousness" – whose eventual return is expected. Of the extraordinary career of Jesus, of his innumerable miraculous healings, of his teaching during three full years in the midst of the people of Palestine, of his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, so brilliantly described in the canonical gospels, of his trial and his crucifixion (accompanied, according to the canonical gospels, by such striking events as an earthquake, the darkening of the sky for three hours, and the rending of the veil of the Temple in two) – of all this, *not a single word is spoken* in the scrolls of these ascetics, eminently religious men who would surely have taken an interest in such events. It would seem, according to these "Dead Sea Scrolls" – I recommend, to anyone who is interested, John Allegro's study in English – either that Jesus did not make any impression on the religious minds of his time, as avid for wisdom and as well informed as the ascetics of the monastery in question appear to have been, or else ... that he, quite simply, never existed! As troubling as this conclusion is, it must be placed before the general public and, in particular, before the Christian public, in light of the recent discoveries.

With regard to the Christian Church, however, and Christianity as an historical phenomenon, and the role it has played in the West and in the world, the question has much less importance than might at first appear. For even if Jesus lived and preached, he was not the true founder of Christianity as it presents itself in the world. If he really lived, Jesus was a man "above Time" whose kingdom – as he himself, according to gospels, told Pilate – was "not of this world," a man whose every activity and every teaching aimed to reveal, to those whom this world could not satisfy, a spiritual path by which they could escape from it and could find, in their own internal paradise, in this "Kingdom of God" which is in us, God "in spirit and truth," whom they were seeking without knowing it. If he actually lived, Jesus never dreamed of founding a temporal *organization* – and especially not a political and financial organization – such as the Christian Church so quickly became. Politics did not interest him. And he was so determined an enemy of any interference of money in spiritual affairs that some Christians have, rightly or wrongly, seen in his hatred of wealth an argument proving, contrary to the teaching of all the Christian Churches (except, naturally, those, like the Monophysites, that deny his human nature absolutely), that he was not of Jewish blood. The true founder of historical Christianity, of Christianity as we it know in practice, as it has played and still plays a role in the history of the West and of the world, was not Jesus, of whom we know nothing, nor his disciple Peter, of whom we know that he was a Galilean and a simple fisherman by vocation, but rather Paul of Tarsus, who was Jewish by blood, by training and by temperament, and, what is more, was a literate, learned Jew and a "Roman citizen," in the same way that so many Jewish intellectuals today are French, German, Russian, or American citizens.

Historical Christianity – which is not at all a work "above Time" but well and truly a work "in Time" – was the work of Saul called Paul, that is, the work of a Jew, just

as Marxism would be two thousand years later. So let us examine the career of Paul of Tarsus.

Saul, called Paul, was a Jew and, furthermore, a Jew both orthodox and learned, **a Jew imbued with a consciousness of his race and of the role that the "chosen people" must, according to Jehovah's promise, play in the world**. He was the pupil of Gamaliel, one of the most famous Jewish theologians of his time, a theologian of the Pharisees, precisely that school which, according to the gospels, the Prophet Jesus, whom the Christian Church would later elevate to the rank of God, most violently combated on account of its pride, its hypocrisy, its practice of theological hair-splitting and of putting the letter of the Jewish Law above its spirit – above, at least, what he believed to be its spirit; on these points we can assume that Saul was a typical Pharisee. Moreover -- and this is crucial – Saul was a learned and conscious Jew *born and raised outside of Palestine* in one of those cities of Roman Asia Minor that succeeded Hellenistic Asia Minor, while retaining all its essential characteristics: Tarsus, where Greek was everyone's *lingua franca*, where Latin was becoming increasingly familiar, and where one could meet representatives of all the various peoples of the Near East. In other words, he was already a "ghetto" Jew having, in addition to an intimate knowledge of Israelite tradition, an understanding of the world of the *goyim* – of non-Jews – which would later prove invaluable to him. Doubtless he thought, like every good Jew, that the *goy* exists only to be dominated and exploited by the "chosen people," but he understood the non-Jewish world infinitely better than did the majority of the Jews in Palestine, the social environment that produced all the earliest believers in the new religious sect which he himself was destined to transform into Christianity as we know it today.

We know from the *Acts of the Apostles* that Saul was initially a fierce persecutor of the new sect. After all, did not its adherents scorn the Jewish Law, in a strict sense of the word? Had not the man that they recognized as their leader and that they said had risen from the dead, this Jesus, whom Saul himself had never seen, set an example of non-observance of the Sabbath, of negligence of fast days, and of other highly blameworthy transgressions of the rules of life from which a Jew must never deviate? It was even said that a mystery, which could portend nothing good, surrounded his birth; perhaps he was not entirely of Jewish origin – who knows? How not to persecute such a sect, if you are an orthodox Jew, a pupil of the great Gamaliel? It was necessary to preserve the observers of the Law from scandal. Saul, who had already shown proof of his zeal by being present at the stoning of Stephen, one of the first preachers of this dangerous sect, continued to defend Jewish Law and tradition against those whom he regarded as heretics, until he recognized, finally, that there was something better – much better – to be made of it, precisely *from a Jewish point of view*. **This he recognized on the road to Damascus**.

History, as the Christian Church tells it, would have us believe that it was there that he suddenly experienced a vision of Jesus – whom he had never, I repeat, seen in the flesh – and that he heard the latter's voice saying to him: "Saul, Saul, why dost thou persecute me?," a voice he could not resist. He was, moreover, supposedly blinded by a dazzling light and thrown to the ground. Taken to Damascus – according to the same account in

Acts – he met one of faithful of the sect that he had come there to combat, a man who, after restoring his sight, baptized him and received him into the Christian community.

It is superfluous to say that this miraculous narrative can only be accepted, as it stands, by those who share the Christian faith. Like all narratives of this kind, it has no *historical* value. Anyone who, without preconceived ideas, seeks a plausible explanation – convincing, natural – of how events actually transpired, cannot be satisfied with it. And the explanation, to be plausible, must take into account not only the transformation of Saul into Paul – of the fierce defender of Judaism into the founder of the Christian Church as we know it – but also of the nature, content and direction of his activity after his conversion, of **the internal logic of his career**; in other words, of the psychological link, more or less conscious, between his anti-Christian past and his great Christian enterprise. Any conversion implies a link between the convert's past and the remainder of his life, a profound reason, that is, a permanent aspiration within the convert which the act of conversion satisfies; a will, a permanent direction of life and action, of which the act of conversion is the expression and the instrument.

Now, given all that we know of him, and *especially what we know of the rest of his career*, there is only one profound and fundamental will, inseparable from the personality of Paul of Tarsus at *all* stages of his life, that can provide an explanation of his Damascene conversion, and that will is the desire **to serve the old Jewish ideal of spiritual domination, itself the complement and crowning culmination of the ideal of economic domination**. Saul, an orthodox Jew, a racially conscious Jew, who had fought against the new sect on the assumption that it represented a danger to Jewish orthodoxy, could renounce his orthodoxy and become the soul and the arm precisely of so dangerous a sect only after having recognized that, **revised by him, transformed, adapted to the requirements of the wider world of the *goyim*** – the "Gentiles" of the gospels – and interpreted, if it were necessary, so as to give, as Nietzsche would put it later, "a new meaning to the ancient mysteries," it could become, during the centuries that followed and perhaps even in perpetuity, **the most powerful instrument of Israel's spiritual domination**, the means that would accomplish, most surely and most definitively, **the self-professed "mission" of the Jewish people to reign over other peoples** and **to subjugate them morally, all the while exploiting them economically**. And **the more complete the moral subjugation, it goes without saying, the more the economic exploitation would flourish**. Only this prize was worth the painful effort of repudiating the rigidity of the old and venerable Law. Or, to speak in a more mundane language, **the sudden conversion of Saul on the road to Damascus can be naturally explained only if it is admitted that he must have had a sudden glimpse into the possibilities that nascent Christianity offered him for the profit and the moral influence of his people**, and that he would have thought – in a stroke of genius, it must be said: "I was short-sighted in persecuting this sect, instead of making use of it, whatever the cost! I was stupid to stick to forms – mere details – instead of seeing the essential issue: the interests of the people of Israel, of the chosen people, of our people, of us Jews!"

The entirety of Paul's later career is an illustration – a proof, insofar as one can think of "proving" facts of this nature – of this brilliant reversal, of the victory of an intelligent

Jew, a practical man, a diplomat (and whoever says "diplomat" in connection with religious questions really says deceiver) over the orthodox, learned Jew, concerned above all with problems of ritual purity. After his conversion Paul indeed gave himself up to the "Spirit" and went where the "Spirit" suggested, or rather ordered to him to go, and he spoke the words which the "Spirit" inspired in him. **Now, where did the Holy Spirit "order" him to go? Was it into Palestine, among the Jews who still shared the "errors" that he had just publicly abjured and who would seem the first to be entitled to his new revelation? Never!** That's the one thing he won't do! It is instead in Macedonia, as well as in Greece and among the Greeks of Asia Minor, among the Galatians, and later among the Romans – in Aryan countries, or at any rate in *non-Jewish countries* – that the neophyte preaches the theological dogma of original sin and of eternal salvation through the crucified Jesus, and **the moral dogma of the equality of all men and all peoples**; it is in Athens that he proclaims that God created "all nations, all peoples *of one and the same blood*" (*Acts* 17.26).

In this denial of the natural differences among the races, the Jews themselves had of course no interest, but it was from their point of view very useful to preach it, to impose it on the *goyim* in order to destroy in them those national values which had, hitherto, formed their strength (or rather simply to hasten their destruction; for, since the fourth century before Christ, they had already been declining under the influence of the "hellenized" Jews of Alexandria). No doubt Paul also preached "in the synagogues," that is, to other Jews, to whom he presented the new doctrine as the outcome of prophecies and messianic expectations; no doubt he said to the sons of his people, as well as to the "fearers of the Lord" – to the half-Jews, like Timothy, and to the Jewish quarters that abounded in Aegean seaports (as in Rome) – that Christ crucified and resurrected, whom he announced, was none other than the promised Messiah. He gave new meaning to Jewish prophecies just as he gave new meaning to the immemorial mysteries of Greece, Egypt, Syria and Asia Minor: a meaning that **ascribed to the Jewish people a unique role, a unique place and a unique importance *in the religion of non-Jews*. For him it was simply the means of ensuring for his people spiritual domination in the future**. His genius – not religious, but *political* – consists in having understood this.

But it is not only in the field of doctrine that he can demonstrate such disconcerting flexibility: "a Greek with the Greeks, and a Jew with the Jews," as he himself says. He has a keen sense of practical necessities, as well as impossibilities. He is himself, although initially so orthodox, **the first to oppose any imposition of the Jewish Law on Christian converts of non-Jewish race**. He insists – against Peter and the less conciliatory group of the first Christians in Jerusalem – that a Christian of non-Jewish origin has no need of circumcision nor of Jewish dietary regulations. In his letters he writes to his new faithful – half-Jews, half-Greeks, Romans of doubtful origin, Levantines of all the ports of the Mediterranean: to everyone without race, to all those he is in the process of shaping into a link between his immutable people and their traditions, and the vast world to be conquered – that there does not exist, for them, any distinction between what is "clean" and what is "unclean," that they are permitted to eat whatever they please ("whatever is sold in the market"). **He knew that, without**

these concessions, Christianity could not hope to conquer the West, nor could Israel hope to conquer the world, through the intermediary of the converted West.

Peter, who was not at all a "ghetto" Jew and was thus still unfamiliar with conditions in the non-Jewish world, did not see things from the same perspective – *not yet*, in any case. It is for that reason that we must see in **Paul the true founder of historical Christianity**: the man **who formed, from the purely spiritual teaching of the prophet Jesus, the basis of a militant organization "in Time" whose goal was, in the deep consciousness of the Apostle, nothing less than the domination of his own people over a world morally emasculated and physically bastardized**, a world **wherein a misunderstood love of "man" leads directly to the indiscriminate mixture of the races and the suppression of all national pride – in a word, to human degeneration**.

It is time that the non-Jewish nations finally open their eyes to this reality of two thousand years, that they grasp all its poignant topicality, and that they react accordingly.

Written at Maadi (near Cairo) on June 18, 1957.

First published as *Paul de Tarse, ou christianisme et juiverie* (Calcutta: Savitri Devi Mukherji, 1958). Trans. Irmin. The original French text is also available. Savitri, almost certainly writing from memory, makes two small factual errors in the preceding essay: (1) the account of Mary's parents to which she refers appears in the apocryphal Gospel of James, not in the New Testament; (2) the rumor that Jesus' father was a Roman legionary nicknamed Panthera was reported by the pagan philosopher Celsus in his anti-Christian polemic *True Doctrine*. It does not appear in any of the apocryphal gospels, as Savitri mistakenly suggests. Variations on the story can be found in the Jewish Talmud.

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[1] Anne, the grandmother of Jesus, like Mary Magdalene, was an initiate of the Temples of Isis in Egypt. She held the secret of immortality and lived well over a hundred years. She grew up in Palestine and was part of Jesus' entourage when they emigrated to Gaul for refuge after the "Christic drama," that is, the Crucifixion. Jesus' entire entourage remained in Gaul for several years in the Bugarach region (Pyrenees) before moving to Britain, to the well-known Glastonbury area where Anne spent her final years. Mary died in Galatia (modern-day Turkey), the ancestral homeland of the Galatians, where the Temple of Ephesus was located. Mary Magdalene ended her earthly life on the island of Iona, off the Welsh coast, the quintessential island of the Druids. Joachim left our plane of existence long before Anne's departure for Europe. Mary was an emanation of the goddess Isis and was chosen because of her level of purity to give birth to Christ, as was the custom in the primordial Celtic culture (authentic Christianity).

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